

Fit WIC: Making It Happen!



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California Fit WIC Project



- collaboration between:
 - CA Dept. of Health Services, WIC Branch
 - University of California, Berkeley
- aim:
 - develop, implement and evaluate childhood obesity prevention interventions in 3 WIC sites and communities

California Fit WIC Project



- focused on 3 pilot sites with high proportion of Latino children
 - 70% of CA WIC participants are Latino
 - Latinos are at greater risk for obesity
- emphasized community involvement
- based on Spectrum of Prevention model



Spectrum of Prevention Levels

- strengthen individual knowledge and skills
- promote community education
- educate providers
- foster coalitions and networks
- change organizational practices
- influence policy and legislation

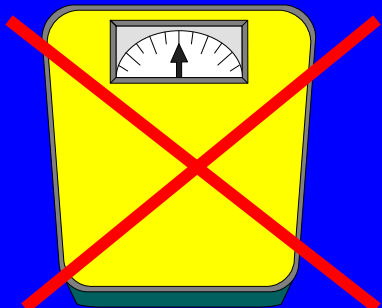
What WIC Staff and Families Said

CA Fit WIC Focus Group
and Survey Data



What Did WIC Staff Say About How WIC Can Help Families?

- Focus on healthy behaviors for all children, not on weight and size
- Offer parents concrete strategies, focusing more on “how to”



What Did WIC Staff Say They Need to Be Role Models for WIC Families?

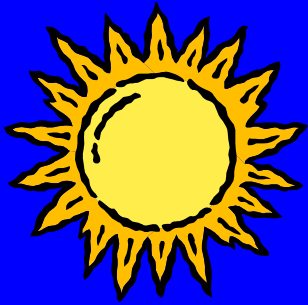
- Supportive environment at WIC site to help in making healthy lifestyle changes
- More training on nutrition, physical activity and childhood overweight





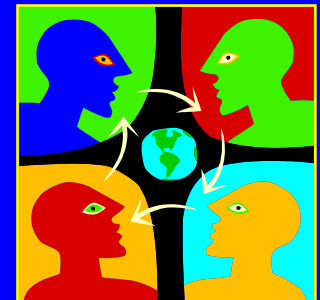
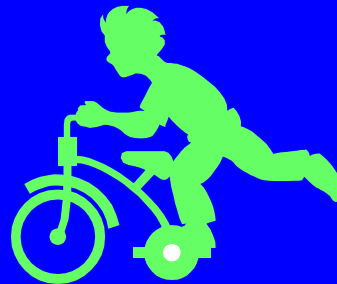
CA Fit WIC Project Activities

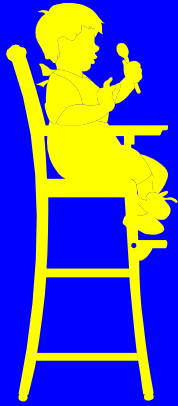
- **staff:** empower WIC staff to be role models for participants
- **participants:** change WIC participant education approaches
- **community:** create community task forces on children and weight



Staff Intervention

- Staff wellness program
- Staff training





Staff Training



- Facilitated Group Discussion Skills
- Physical Activity for Young Children and Families
- Talking About Weight
- Parenting and Feeding



Staff Wellness Program

- **Physical activity:** wellness training, walking clubs, aerobics
- **Healthy eating:** healthy potlucks, fruit and vegetable snacks
- **Incentive items:** lunch bags, water bottles, tote bags, stress balls



Participant Education: New Approaches to Individual Education

- learner-centered approach: focus on families' needs and experiences
- new approaches in talking with parents about weight issues

Participant Education: New Classes

- bring physical activity into WIC education for children and families -- low-cost activities to do at home
- cooking classes, food demonstrations, recipe sharing
- garden classes, WIC site mini-gardens, tying gardens to nutrition education

Fit WIC Impact on WIC Staff



Personal Changes Toward a Healthier Lifestyle

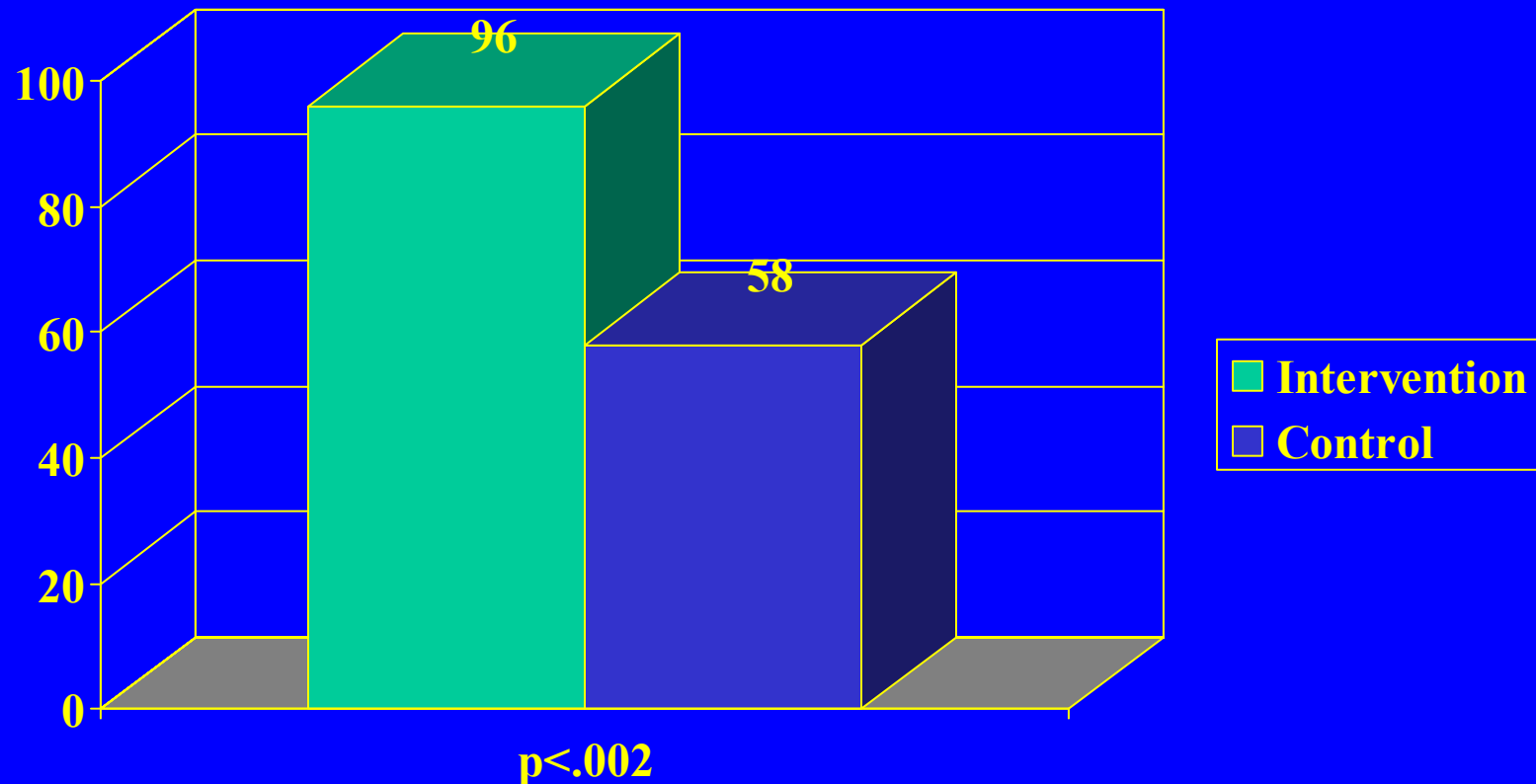


“Personally, Fit WIC helped me to be more aware of the many small steps I can take each day toward a healthier lifestyle.”



“We know a lot more about what is good for us. I also walk more at work.”

Staff at intervention sites more often reported that their workplace supports their own efforts to be physically active



Workplace Support

Staff said their workplace was “very supportive” in helping them make healthy food and activity choices

“We ourselves as employees, we are more active...we have more vegetables, fruits, water, and started walking on breaks...”

Walking the Talk

“ Although it has not been easy... little by little it has helped me change my lifestyle completely. It has motivated me to do more exercise. It is also easier for me to help my family.”

“For me personally, Fit WIC has meant losing weight and actually keeping it off for a year now!”

Fit WIC Impact on Participant Education

WIC Staff More Comfortable With Weight Issues

“In the clinic, I’m more comfortable talking with participants about weight issues, and I have better materials and information to work with.”



“ I feel more confident now when talking to parents about weight. I know how to word questions and have good handouts.”

“I’m more sensitive, I address the problem in a way that I don’t make them feel bad.”

WIC Staff Better Able to Help Participants

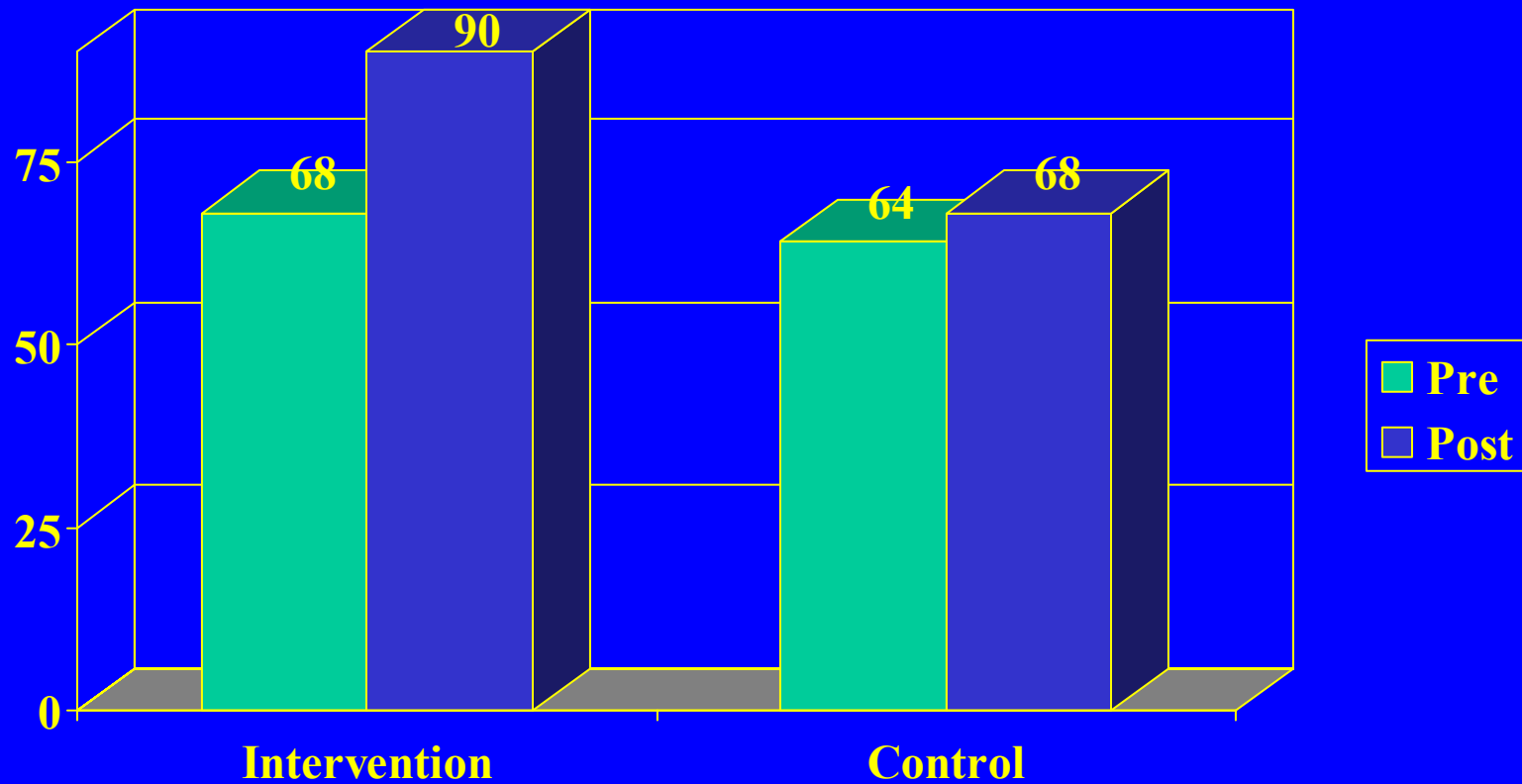
“The most awkward for me has been to speak with parents about their overweight child... I now have more magic tricks in my bag. I can individualize my approach to meet different client needs.”



Talking About Weight

- Staff almost all report changing the way they talk with WIC parents about weight issues over the past year (92% vs. 58 %; $p < .01$)
- Staff feel that they have been successful helping WIC parents with their overweight children

Percent of staff reporting success helping parents with overweight children



More Emphasis on Physical Activity

“This program gave us inexpensive and practical ideas to share with parents. I realized that it doesn’t take a lot of money for families to be physically active.”

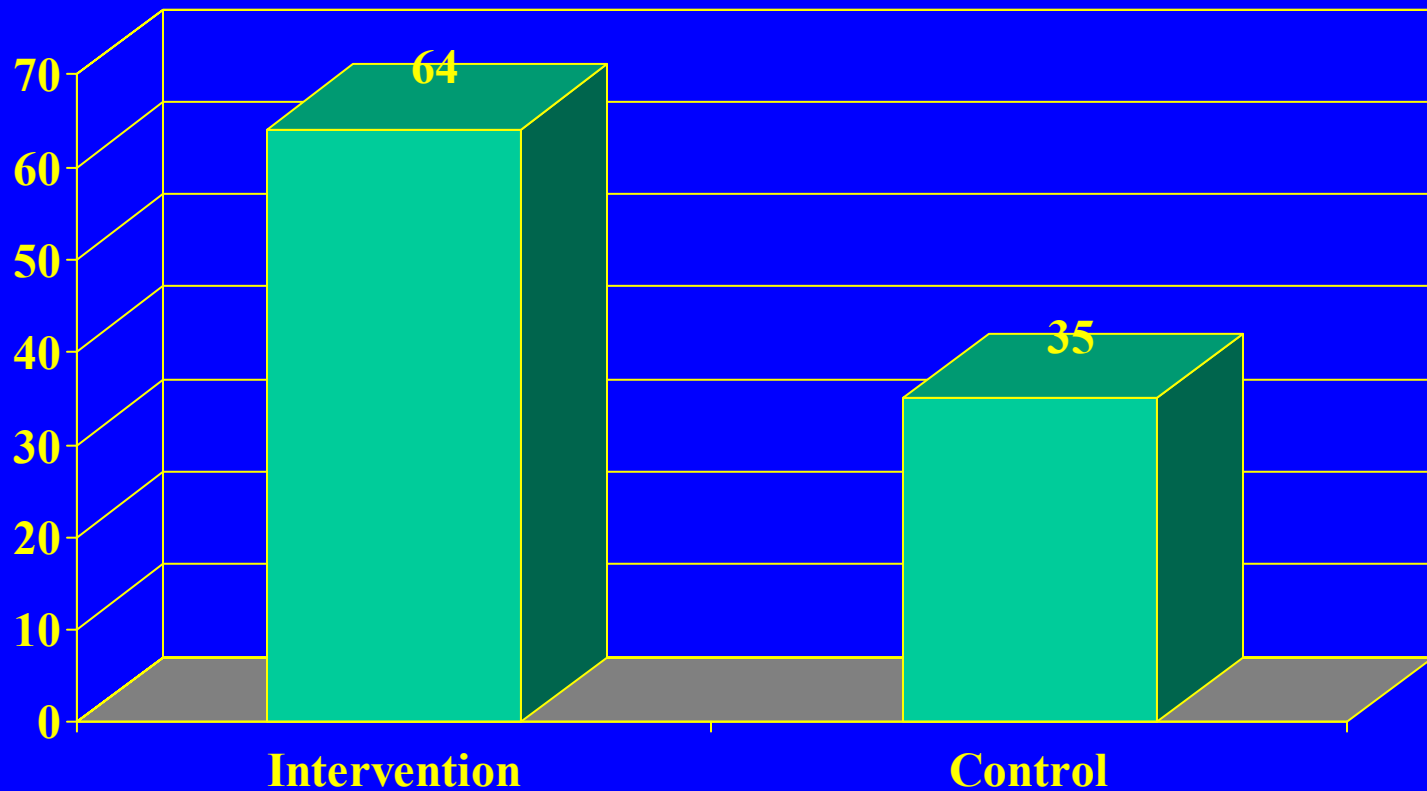


Talking About Physical Activity

Intervention staff were twice as likely to report “almost always” talking with parents about physical activity (48% vs. 23%)

“We talk to our clients about how much fun it is to be active and play with their kids. Clients are more into exercise.”

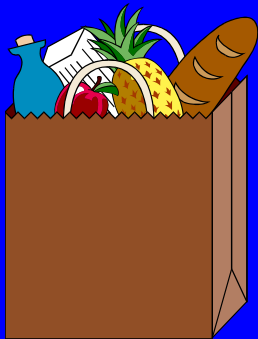
Fit WIC staff were more likely to report being “very comfortable” encouraging WIC parents to do physical activities with their children



Referral Practices

Percent of staff reporting they made more referrals to community physical activity resources in the past year





Participants Are Making Changes

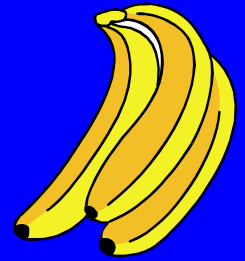


“It has really helped our clients develop a healthier lifestyle.”

“Many of our WIC parents found out how easy it is to start exercising.”



Teaching Is Fun

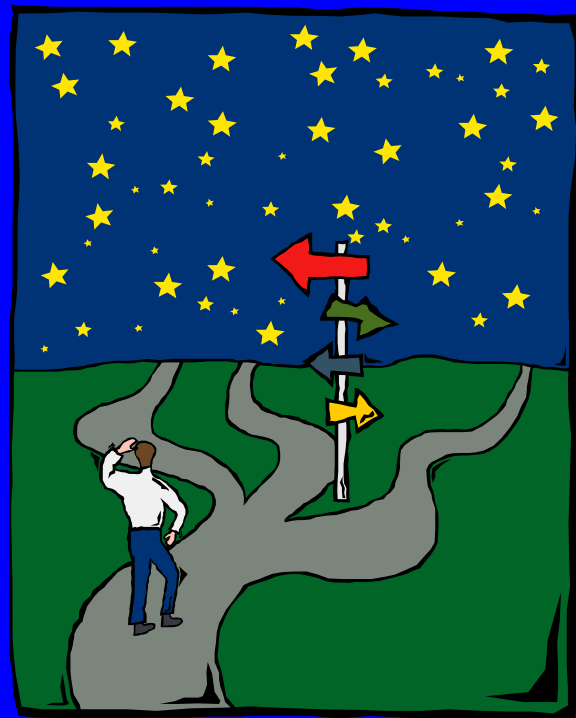


“It was exciting to teach the cooking and physical activity classes because the participants responded so well to them... the participants shared equally in the teaching... by working with their children.”



“Mothers loved it, the kids were super-involved, and I was excited to teach.”

Where Are We Going?

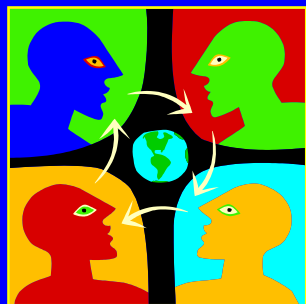


Current Fit WIC Training Plans



- 2 different quarterly training sessions in various regions throughout the state
- Focus on:
 - staff wellness
 - learner-centered group and individual education skills
 - active play for families

Fit WIC: Supporting WIC Families and Staff

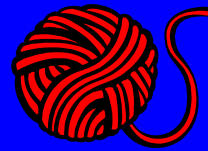


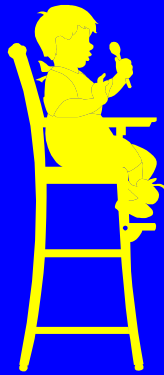
- Interacting more effectively with WIC families with overweight children
- Using FGD to help families be more active
- Supporting staff in developing healthy lifestyles
- Materials and resources for staff training and participant education



Fit WIC: Active Play for Families

- Age appropriate movement for toddlers and preschoolers
- Making homemade toys
- Ways to bring physical activity into WIC education and to help families be active at home
- Hands-on practice designing activities for WIC classes





Fit WIC Lesson Plans

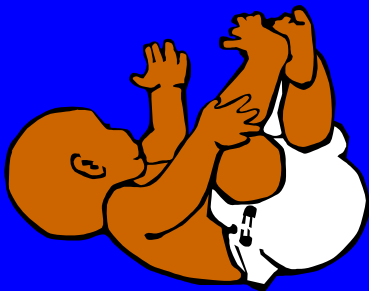


Developing and testing learner-centered lesson plans:

- family-centered: container gardening, hands-on physical activity with kids, healthy snacks, picky eaters
- FGD with parents: fast food, physical activity/ TV, healthy snacks, feeding relationships

Physical Activity Handouts

- Playing With Your Baby
- Playing With Your Toddler
- Playing With Your 3 to 5 Year Old



Partners in Preventing Childhood Obesity

- WIC needs to partner with health care providers and community organizations
- families need to hear the same messages from all sources
- focus on healthy lifestyles for all children, not on weight

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